

REMARKS

The office action of January 9, 2008, has been carefully considered.

It is noted claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over JP 07-275920 to Fukaya et al.

In view of the Examiner's rejections of the claims, applicant has canceled claims 5 and 12 and amended claims 1 and 9.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the constructions and methods disclosed in the reference.

Turning now to the reference, it can be seen that Fukaya et al. disclose descaling a metal surface with a discharge arc in a vacuum. Kukaya et al. do not disclose inspecting the surface of the metal casting after the device for plasma descaling and/or plasma cleaning, as in the presently claimed invention. Furthermore, Fukaya et al. do not disclose specifying the speed with which the metal casting is guided through the device for

plasma descaling and/or plasma cleaning in the closed-loop control in dependence on the inspection, such that the desired quality of descaling and/or cleaning is attained, as in the present invention.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over the above-discussed reference is overcome and should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on April 9, 2008.

By:   
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